



19 May 2021

Artur  
fyi-request-15280-df9601b4@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: DOIA 2021-2145

Dear Artur,

Thank you for your email of 25 April 2021 requesting under the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA), the following information:

*"1) How many nonpriority SMC/RFW onshore applications are currently on hand and awaiting allocation to an Immigration Officer for a time period from July 2019 to the time you reply to this request (monthly breakdown).*

*2) What is the lodgement date of applications from non-priority onshore SMC/RFW queue are you currently allocating to the case officers?*

*3) How many applications from non-priority onshore SMC/RFW queue were allocated to the case officers from 1 January 2021 to 1 May 2021 (weekly breakdown)?*

*4) How many priority applications were allocated to the case officers for the period from 1 January 2021 to 1 May 2021 (weekly breakdown)?*

*5) What are the reasons that manager of Manukau branch has stopped updating applicants about lodgement date of applications being allocated to the case officers?*

*6) Have you received any directions, instructions from the Minister of immigration regarding non-priority onshore SMC/RFW queue for the time period from 1 January 2021 to 1 May 2021? If yes, I would request you to release this communication under the OIA 1982.*

*7) You are processing SMC/RFW applications as per previous NZRP which expired in 2020. As per last NZRP, INZ is allowed to grant anywhere between 25,500 to 30,600 residence visas for skilled / business applicants. Within those brackets, is INZ targeting for the lower number or upper limit? Are you allowed to grant less the lower limit or exceed the upper limit?*

*8) Do you have any instructions, directions from the Minister of Immigration or the management of INZ as to what particular number of SMC/RFW applicants can be granted resident visas for the current period?*

*9) What advice (if any) was given to the Minister of Immigration regarding SMC/RFW non-priority queue from INZ management for the period from 1 January 2021 to 1 May 2021? What advice (if any) was given to the Minister of Immigration from INZ regarding EOI pool for the same time period?*

*10) When INZ started informally prioritising SMC applicants based on salary, occupational registration and other criteria from 2018, had INZ consulted with the Minister of Immigration about making that move?*

*11) Why INZ chose not to publicly announce those priority criteria for SMC applicants at the time of introduction of these criteria back in 2018?*

*12) Did INZ receive any legal advice before introduction of the informal priority criteria back in 2018? If yes, I would request you to release those papers under the OIA 1982."*

I am writing to advise you that the Ministry will provide a response but needs to extend the time available to answer your request. The Ministry's response will be with you no later than 09 June 2021.

The reason for the extension relies on s15A(1)(b) of the OIA – consultations necessary to make a decision on the request are such that a proper response to the request cannot be made within the original time limit.

I will respond to your request sooner if I am able to. If you would like to withdraw your request or contact us to re-scope your request, please email [Lautalie.Leausavaa@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:Lautalie.Leausavaa@mbie.govt.nz)

You have the right to seek an investigation and review of our decision to extend the time limit by the Ombudsman at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or free-phone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Carley  
Manager Operations Support - Border and Visa Operations  
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment